The Search for the Truth

by

a Man Known as

Salman the Persian

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باللغة الإنجليزية

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Second Edition, 1425/2004

We would like to express our sincere appreciation to those who contributed to the publication of this book. May Allah reward them for their efforts. If you have any corrections, comments, or questions about this publication, please feel free to contact us at:

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1425 H

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Published by:

The Islamic Propagation Office in Rabwah

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الطبعة الثانية، ١٤٢٥/٢٠٠٤

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المكتب التعاوني للدعوة وتوعية الجاليات بالربوة

هاتف: ٤٤٥٤٩٠٠ – ٤٩١٦٠٦٥ تحويلة ٢٦-٢٧

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عنوان الموقع: www.islamhouse.com

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بسم ا الر ن الرحيم

In The Name of Allah, the Most Merciful, the Most Compassionate.

Introduction

All Praise is due to Allah; we praise Him, seek His Help, and seek His forgiveness. We seek refuge in Allah, the Most High, from the evils of our own selves and from our wicked deeds. Whomsoever Allah guides, none can misguide him, and whomsoever Allah leads astray, none can guide him. I bear witness that there is no true deity worthy of being worshipped except Allah, Alone, without any partner or associate. I further bear witness that Muhammad is His true slave and Messenger. May Allah, the Exalted, bestow His Peace and Blessings upon the final prophet, Muhammad, his good and pure family, and upon all of his noble companions.

Today, many people are curious about Islam, but their knowledge about this faith may vary. Their knowledge may have been gained from an article, a book, or part of a religious text book at high school they may have read. They may have known some Muslims, passed by a Mosque, watched a documentary or the evening news, or they might have traveled to a Muslim country. To some, Islam is 'just another religion', but for many others, it has become something 'interesting' to 'look' at. I have written this book for those who are searching within themselves for answers to the many questions they have. "Who am I? Who is the True God? What is the true road to salvation? Is it Islam? If I become a Mus-

lim, what does it mean to me, my family, and the society at large?"

Today, many people realize that all of the materialistic and secular progress which has taken place in society has produced a spiritual vacuum, which in turn has led to social, economic, political and psychological problems. For this reason, those who previously said, "Let us live this life and enjoy it," or "Hey! We don't want to know about God," are now again searching for the truth. They are raising questions similar to those raised above. This is because the innate nature of man recognizes what is good and bad, and what is true and false. It does not feel at ease when Allah's attributes are degraded, and also when humanlike qualities are associated with Him. It recognizes that there can be no more than One and Only True God, and thus One and Only true religion accepted by Him. Allah does not request some of the creation to worship Him alone, while ordering to worship Jesus عليه السلام,[1] Buddha, fire, light, Krishna, Joseph Smith, the Sun, the Moon, Khomeini, Rama, temples, Prophets, Eliajah, Farakhan, a cross, a tree, a triangle, saints, priests, monks, or anything else.

Everything besides Allah is a creation! They are imperfect. They are in need of others, but Allah is Self-Sufficient. He is The First, having nothing before Him, and The Last, having nothing after Him. To Him is the Final Return. He does not beget nor is He begotten. No human gave Him the name Allah; rather, He named Himself with this name. It means 'the True and Only Deity Who Deserves to Be Worshipped'. He is not a nationalistic or a tribal god. He is the Creator of everything. He, therefore, deserves that

[1] This symbol represents the phrase ' 'alayh-is-Salam' which means: peace be upon him. Out of respect, Muslims are commanded to state this phrase after mentioning the name of any prophet or messenger.

we submit to Him Alone, and He called this type of submission 'Islam'.

Confusion, though, came on the part of man when people started to worship creation, whether animate or inanimate, besides Allah! In the final Revealed Message to mankind, the Qur'aan**,** Allah clearly explains the purpose for man's presence in this world. Outwardly and inwardly, man is called to live in accordance with Allah's way. This is the meaning of worship in Islam, and it is the purpose for which we all have been created. There are those, though, who accept Allah as the Only True God who deserves to be worshipped, but do not live in accordance with Allah's commandments. Their practices are deviated from Islam. They are not the criteria upon which Islam should be judged. Islam is perfect but people are not. We are called to search into Islam.

The objective of this book is to call people to search for their salvation by examining the story of a long search by a man called Salman 'Al-Farisee', or 'the Persian'. Why not? Do we know everything? When we know that we do not even posses the air we breath, and that we were not created by nothing, nor did we create ourselves, it becomes natural that one desires to learn more about God (Allah), Who created us, gave us life, and Who, one Day, will call us back to Him. On that Day, there will either be endless bliss or endless torment.

Salman and His Story

The Beginning

No one can tell the story of Salman better than he himself. Salman ﷺ narrated his story to one of the companions and a close relative of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ[2] by the name of Abdullah bin 'Abbaas, who in turn narrated it to others.[3] Ibn 'Abbaas said,

> **Salman said, "I was a Persian man from the people of Isfahaan[4] from a town known as Jayi. My father was the town chief. To him, I was the most beloved creature of Allah. His love for me reached the point to which he trusted me to supervise the fire[5] he lit. He would not let it die down."**

This is an indication of good behavior of a son towards his father. Here Salman used the correct name of the true God, Allah. The name Allah is the same name used by all of the Prophets and Messengers ﷺ. Allah is the same name of God in the Aramaic language of our beloved Prophet Jesus ﷺ.

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[2] This symbol represents the phrase 'Sall-Allahu 'alayhi wa sallam', which means: May Allah exalt him and send peace be upon him. Out of respect, Muslims are commanded to state this phrase after mentioning the name of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ.

[3] This hadeeth was related in the 'Musnad' of Imaam Ahmed.

[4] Isfahaan: A Region in northwest Iran.

[5] His father was a Magean who worshipped fire.

A Different Religion?

"My father owned a large area of fertile land. One day, while busy with his construction, he told me to go to his land and fulfill some chores he desired. On my way to his land, I came across a Christian church. I heard the sound of people praying inside. I did not know how people lived outside, for my father kept me confined to his house! So when I came across those people [of the church] and I heard their voices, I went inside to watch what they were doing."

Interest Arises

"When I saw them, I liked their prayers and became interested in their matter [i.e., religion]. I said [to myself], 'By Allah, this religion is better than that of ours.' "

Salman kept an open mind, free from blind imitation.

"By Allah, I did not leave them until sunset. I did not go to my father's Land."

Salman gave himself the time to contemplate this religion which he, at that point, thought was the correct belief. A perceptive and kind heart charged with patience are virtues which are necessary to free oneself from being confined to a thought such as, "O well! I will try to find out, but I'm too busy now," etc. Death may knock at the door sooner than one may hope.

"I asked [i.e., the people of the church]. 'From where did this religion originate?' "

Seeking the 'origin' is a guide for those in search of the true religion. The 'origin' and 'essence' are essential terms that help in the search process. What is the 'origin' of Islam and what is its essence? Islam came from Allah, the Creator, the True God, and its essence is submission to Him ﷻ.[6]

"They said, 'In ash-Shaam.'[7] I returned to my father who had become worried and sent [someone] after me. Upon my arrival, he said, 'O son! Where have you been? Didn't I entrust you with an assignment?' I said, 'O my father, I came across some people praying in their church and I liked their religion. By Allah I stayed with them until sunset.' "

This is amazing honesty shown by a person who knows well his father's commitment to his religion. This is the kind of openness which one who is in search for the truth must have.

The Opposition

"My father said, 'O Son! There is no good in that religion, the religion of you and your forefathers' is better.' "

This is the theme of all those who blindly follow others in matters of faith. It reminds us of the saying of Allah,

[6] This symbol represents the phrase 'Subhaanahu wa Ta'aalaa' which means: May Allah be exalted from what the disbelievers associate with Him. Out of respect, Muslims state this phrase after mentioning the Name of Allah.

[7] Ash-Shaam: The Levant. It encompasses the areas known today as Lebanon, Syria, Palestine, and Jordan.

﴿وَقَالَ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ لَا تَسْمَعُوا۟ لِهَٰذَا ٱلْقُرْءَانِ وَٱلْغَوْا۟ فِيهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ
تَغْلِبُونَ ﴿٢٦﴾﴾

"And those who disbelieve say, 'Do not listen to this Qur'aan, rather speak noisily during [the recitation of] it, that perhaps you will overcome.' "

[Surah al-Fussilat (41):26]

إِنَّا ﴿وَجَدْنَآ ءَابَآءَنَا عَلَىٰٓ أُمَّةٍ وَإِنَّا عَلَىٰٓ ءَاثَٰرِهِم مُّهْتَدُونَ ﴿٢٢﴾﴾

"We found our fathers following a certain way and religion, and we guide ourselves by their footsteps."

[Surah al-Zukhruf (43):22]

﴿بَلْ نَتَّبِعُ مَا وَجَدْنَا عَلَيْهِ ءَابَآءَنَآ﴾

"Nay, we shall follow that which we found our fathers (following)…"

[Surah Luqman:(31):21]

﴿مَّا سَمِعْنَا بِهَٰذَا فِىٓ ءَابَآئِنَا ٱلْأَوَّلِينَ ﴿٢٤﴾﴾

"Never did we hear of this among our fathers of the old."

[Surah al-Mu'minoon (23):24]

Many times, when you talk to people who have converted to Islam from other religions, they say that they heard the same argu-

ments which Allah mentioned of the disbelievers. The issue is the same. It comes in the form of, "Do you want to leave the religion of your fathers and forefathers?" Not only that, but the parents and the family at large may take a stand against the convert. The magnitude of this opposition may range from actual life threatening situations to strong boycotting. This is the general trend, but there are, however, cases of minor opposition and neutrality.

"I said, 'No, by Allah, it is better than our religion.' "

He loved his father, but he did not flatter him. He didn't compromise about what he felt at that time as the truth. What was his father's response?

Salman said, "He threatened me, chained me by my feet and kept me confined to his home."

A father torturing his beloved son to sway him away from exploring the truth! Many prophets were opposed, accused, and ill-treated by members of their own families because of their opposition to 'known tradition'! Did Salman stop there?

The Way Out

He said, "I sent a message to the Christians requesting them to inform me of the arrival of any Christian trade caravan coming from ash-Shaam. A trade caravan arrived and they informed me, so I then told [the Christians] to let me know once the people of the caravan finish their business and set off to return to their country. I [indeed] was informed [by them] when the people of ash-Shaam finished their business and were about to set off to their country, so I then let loose the chains from my feet and

accompanied [the caravan] until we reached ash-Shaam."

He did not surrender to the unjust orders of his father. He was striving in the cause of the truth, which ultimately led him to realize the truth about the Creator, Allah.

﴿وَالَّذِينَ جَاهَدُوا فِينَا لَنَهْدِيَنَّهُمْ سُبُلَنَا﴾

"As for those who strive hard in Our[8] Cause, We will surely guide them to Our Paths (i.e., Allah's religion, Islamic Monotheism)."

[Surah al-'Ankaboot (29):69]

Salman made up his mind and set out in search of the truth, regardless of the fact that it was a distant and strange land to him. Allah, Most Glorified and Exalted, knowing his honesty, assisted him by making it easy for him to find a means to travel to the land of ash-Shaam.

This is it, But..!

"Upon my arrival I asked, 'Who is the best amongst the people of this religion [of yours]?' "

Salman was in search of the clear truth, and so he sought the best in faith amongst the people of ash-Shaam. Why not? People like

[8] A plural "pronoun" is employed to stress Power, Might, and Greatness. It is common in Semitic languages for any Monarch to use the plural pronoun. It is used by the English Dynasty as well. To Allah, however, belongs the best example. 'We' does not denote the Trinity or any other false concept.

to choose the best food, the best spouse, and the best clothes. Salman was searching for the best in faith.

"They said, 'The bishop. [He is] in the church.' I went to him and said, 'I like this religion, and I would love to be with you and serve you in your church, in order that I may learn from you and pray with you.' "

Salman realized from the start that knowledge can only be gained by associating with its people. In return, he was ready to offer himself as a servant to the bishop. The humbleness of those searching for the truth draws them nearer and nearer to it. In the absence of humbleness, arrogance prevails; people see the signs of the truth, but their arrogance drives them away to their destruction.

﴿ وَجَحَدُوا۟ بِهَا وَٱسْتَيْقَنَتْهَآ أَنفُسُهُمْ ظُلْمًا وَعُلُوًّا ۚ ﴾

"And they belied them (Our Signs: proofs, evidences, verses, lessons, revelations, etc.) wrongfully and arrogantly, though their own selves were convinced thereof (that those Signs are from Allah)."

[Surah an-Naml (27):14]

Wealth, social status, and other material factors must not prohibit a person from seeking the truth, which will ultimately affect his future. All of these things will vanish, and the person will proceed to his grave with nothing except his deeds. These deeds are those of the heart (belief), and those of the tongue and limbs which are the manifestations of the deeds of the heart. Did I submit to my Creator? Did I live according to His Commands as explained in the Qur'aan and by the teachings of the Last Messenger, Mu-

hammad ﷺ? This is the only thing which will be of use on the Day of Recompense.

﴿ يَوْمَ لَا يَنفَعُ مَالٌ وَلَا بَنُونَ ﴿٨٨﴾ إِلَّا مَنْ أَتَى ٱللَّهَ بِقَلْبٍ سَلِيمٍ ﴿٨٩﴾ ﴾

"The Day whereon neither wealth nor sons will avail, * except him who brings to Allah a clean heart (clean from disbelief, polytheism and hypocrisy)."

[Surah ash-Shu'araa'(26):88-89]

"He said, 'You may enter and stay with me,' so I joined him." After some time, Salman discovered something of the bishop. He was a bad man who ordered and motivated his people to pay charity, only to keep it for himself. He did not give it to the poor. He had heaped up seven jars of gold and silver!

This is an example of the corrupt and evil people found in every time and place: the hypocrites and abusive people. Did Salman stop there with that corrupt man? No! He moved to the next stage in his search. He did not turn away from seeking the truth.

"I despised him because of his deeds."

It is clear that his hate of the bishop did not stop him from seeking the truth. Allah, the Most Exalted, guided him, knowing his sincere desire in finding the truth.

"He [the bishop] died. The Christians gathered to bury him. I informed them that he was a bad man who ordered and motivated people to give him their charity only

to keep it for himself, and that he did not give any of it to the poor. They said, 'How do you know this?' I replied, 'I can show you his treasure.' They said, 'Show us!' I showed them the place [where he kept it] and they recovered from it seven jars heaped up with gold and silver. When they saw it they said, 'By Allah we will never bury him.' So they crucified him and stoned him."[9]

The Urge is Strong

Salman said, "They replaced their bishop. I never saw anyone [from them] who prayed the five prescribed prayers better than him [the new bishop]; nor a man more detached from this worldly life and attached to the Hereafter; nor a person more committed to working day and night. I loved him more than anyone else I loved before."

There are five daily prescribed prayers in Islam. Allah taught Prophet Muhammad ﷺ the manner in which to perform these prayers as well as their timings. They are not the kind of 'prayers' which have been developed and are practiced by some people. Prayers are the foundation of Islam. If done according to the Prophet's ﷺ way, they purify a person from the sins and wrong-doings that he may commit during the day.

[9] Editor's note: An important point to note here is that Salman did not turn away from what he thought was the truth at that time because of the actions of one person. He did not say, "Look at these Christians! The best of them is so evil!" Rather, he understood that he had to judge the religion by its beliefs, and not by its adherents.

"I stayed with him for sometime before his death. When his death approached I told him, 'O [so and so], I stayed with you and loved you more than anything else I loved before. Now the Decree of Allah [i.e., death] has come, so who do you recommend for me [to keep to], and with what do you order me?' "

Salman started to think about who he would accompany after the bishop's death. He again thought of searching for righteous people with sound knowledge. His desire and readiness to go after the truth was firm.

"The bishop said 'By Allah! People are in total loss; they have altered and changed [the religion] they were upon. I do not know of anyone who is still holding to the religion I am upon except a man in al-Musil,[10] so join him.' [and he gave him his name]"

Another Move

When the man died, Salman moved to al-Musil and met the person he recommended. "I said to him, '[Such & such person] at the time of his death recommended me to join you. He told me that you are holding to the same [religion] as him.' The man of al-Musil told Salman to stay with him. 'I stayed with him and found him to be the best man holding on to the matter [religion]of his companion.' "

"Soon he died," Salman said. When death approached him, Salman requested of him [as he did earlier with his

[10] Al-Musil: A major city in northwest Iraq.

first companion] to recommend another person who was upon the same religion. The man said, "By Allah! I don't know of anyone on the same matter [religion] as ours except a man in Naseebeen[11] and his name is [such and such], so go and join him."

One More Move

"Following his death, I traveled to the man of Naseebeen." Salman found the man and stayed with him for a while. The same incidents occurred. Death approached and before he died, Salman came to the man and asked for his advice as to whom and where to go. The man recommended that Salman join another man in 'Amooreeyah[12] who was also upon the same religion.

Salman moved to 'Amooreeyah after his companion died. He found his new reference and joined him on his religion. Salman [at that time] worked and, "earned some cows and one sheep."

A good and lawful way of earning is very important to the believer. Certainly the influence of money is great; many have sold themselves and their principles for a cheap price, and many become hypocrites for the sake of money. There are those,though, that stand up for the truth regardless of whatever they may lose. This brings peace to the heart and mind.

[11] Naseebeen: A city on the road between al-Musil and ash-Shaam.

[12] 'Amooreeyah: A town that was part of the Eastern Region of the Roman Empire.

The Big Move

Death approached the man of 'Amooreeyah. Salman repeated his requests, but [this time] the answer was different. The man said, "O son! I don't know of anyone who is upon the same [religion] as we are. However, a Prophet will emerge in your lifetime, and this Prophet is on the same religion as Abraham."

The bishop knew the Path of Abraham. It is the origin of Monotheism, and calls to the worship of Allah Alone. The bishop knew well what Abraham recommended his children,

﴿وَوَصَّىٰ بِهَآ إِبْرَٰهِـۧمُ بَنِيهِ وَيَعْقُوبُ يَـٰبَنِىَّ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ ٱصْطَفَىٰ لَكُمُ ٱلدِّينَ فَلَا تَمُوتُنَّ إِلَّا وَأَنتُم مُّسْلِمُونَ ١٣٢﴾

"And this (submission to Allah, i.e. Islam) was enjoined by Abraham upon his sons and (so did) Jacob, saying, 'O my sons! Allah has chosen for you the (true) religion, then die not except on the Faith of Islam.' "

[Surah al-Baqarah (2):132]

Abraham married Sarah and Haajar (Hagar). From his descendants with his union with Sarah were Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, David, Solomon, Moses and Jesus, peace be upon them all; and from his descendants with his union with Haajar were Ishmael and Muhammad ﷺ. Ishmael was raised in Becca (known also as Makkah) in Arabia, and Muhammad ﷺ was from his descendants.

The man knew that the faith of Abraham is the true faith to be followed. He must have read the promise of Allah to raise a 'Great Nation' from the lineage of Ishmael (Genesis 21:18), and

so he recommended Salman to go and join the Prophet ﷺ, who is from the descendants of Ishmael, who submits to Allah and follows the path of Abraham.

﴿رَبَّنَا وَٱبْعَثْ فِيهِمْ رَسُولًا مِّنْهُمْ يَتْلُوا۟ عَلَيْهِمْ ءَايَٰتِكَ وَيُعَلِّمُهُمُ
ٱلْكِتَٰبَ وَٱلْحِكْمَةَ وَيُزَكِّيهِمْ ۚ إِنَّكَ أَنتَ ٱلْعَزِيزُ ٱلْحَكِيمُ ﴿١٢٩﴾﴾

"Our Rubb![13] Send amongst them a Messenger of their own, who shall recite unto them Your Verses and instruct them in this Book (this Qur'aan) and 'Al-Hikmah' (Full knowledge of Allah's Laws or Jurisprudence or wisdom or Prophethood, etc.), and shall sanctify them. You are the All-Mighty, the All-Wise."

[Surah al-Baqarah (2):129]

﴿ثُمَّ أَوْحَيْنَآ إِلَيْكَ أَنِ ٱتَّبِعْ مِلَّةَ إِبْرَٰهِيمَ حَنِيفًا ۖ وَمَا كَانَ مِنَ
ٱلْمُشْرِكِينَ ﴿١٢٣﴾﴾

"Then, We have inspired you (O Muhammad ﷺ) (saying), 'Follow the religion of Abraham 'Hanifan' (Islamic Monotheism, to worship none but Allah) and he was not of the 'mushrikoon' [i.e., polytheists, pagans,

[13] Rubb: Allah is Ar-Rubb: He is the One Who gives all things the power to grow, move and change, to Whom belongs the Creation and Commandment. He is The Master Who has no equal in His Sovereignty, Predominance, and Highness, and He is The One Who Provides and Sustains all that exists.

idolaters, disbelievers in the Oneness of Allah and in His Messenger ﷺ, those who worship others along with Allah or set up rivals with (or partners to) Allah etc.] ' "

[Surah an-Nahl (16):123]

﴿ إِنَّ أَوْلَى ٱلنَّاسِ بِإِبْرَٰهِيمَ لَلَّذِينَ ٱتَّبَعُوهُ وَهَٰذَا ٱلنَّبِيُّ وَٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ وَلِيُّ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٦٨﴾ ﴾

"Verily, those among mankind who have the best claim to Abraham are those who followed him, and this Prophet (Muhammad ﷺ) and those who have believed (Muslims). And Allah is the Wali (Protector and Helper) of the believers."

[Surah Aali 'Imraan (3):68]

The man described this Prophet, saying, "He will be sent with the same religion as Abraham. He will come from the land of Arabia and will migrate to a place located in between two lands filled with black stones [as if burned by fire]. There are palm trees spread in the midst of these two lands. He can be recognized by certain signs. He [will accept] and eat [from] the [food] which has been given as a gift, but will not eat from charity. The seal of Prophethood will be between his shoulders. If you can move to that land, then do so."

The man knew about the coming of a Prophet from Arabia, from the brethren of the Israelites (Deuteronomy 18, 17-18: "I will raise a prophet from among their Brethren, like unto thee (i.e., Moses)[14] and will put My Words in his mouth.[15] And he shall

[14] A Prophet Like Unto Moses:

Area of Comparison	**Jesus**	**Muhammad ﷺ**	**Moses**
Birth	Usual	Usual	Usual
Family Life	Not Married, no Children	Married, Children	Married, Children
Death	Did Not Die	Usual	Usual
Forced Immigration (in Adulthood)	None	To Madinah	To Median
Writing Down of Revelation	After him	In his lifetime	In his lifetime
Acceptance of Leadership (by his people)	Rejected by most Israelites	Rejected then accepted	Rejected then accepted

[15] Muhammad ﷺ was forty years of age when he was in the cave of Hira in Makkah when the Archangel Gabriel Commanded him to, **"Read"** or **"Recite"**. Muhammad ﷺ was terrified and replied, "I am not learned!" Then the Angel recited and the Prophet ﷺ rehearsed the Words of Allah,

﴿ ٱقۡرَأۡ بِٱسۡمِ رَبِّكَ ٱلَّذِي خَلَقَ ١ خَلَقَ ٱلۡإِنسَٰنَ مِنۡ عَلَقٍ ٢ ٱقۡرَأۡ وَرَبُّكَ
ٱلۡأَكۡرَمُ ٣ ٱلَّذِي عَلَّمَ بِٱلۡقَلَمِ ٤ عَلَّمَ ٱلۡإِنسَٰنَ مَا لَمۡ يَعۡلَمۡ ٥ ﴾

"Read! In the Name of Your Rubb Who has created (all that exists). * He Who has created man from a clot (a piece of thick

speak unto them all that I shall command him"). Certainly, this verse is not in reference to Jesus as Paul tried to interpret it (Acts 13:22-23). Jesus was neither from the descendants of Ishmael, and being an Israelite himself,[16] he was not from their [the Israelite's] 'brethren'.

The man knew what was mentioned in their book about God's Revelation coming from Teman (North of the City of Medinah in Arabia, according to J. Hasting's Dictionary of the Bible), and the 'holy one' coming from Paran.[17] According to Genesis 21:21, the wilderness of Paran was the place where Prophet Ishmael ﷺ settled and had twelve children, amongst them Kedar the second son of Ishmael ﷺ. In Isaiah 42:1-13, 'the beloved of God' is linked to the descendants of Kedar, the ancestor of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ.

When Prophet Muhammad ﷺ called the People in Makkah to submit to Allah, most of them refused, and they in turn plotted to kill the Prophet ﷺ. He along with those who accepted Islam was commanded by Allah to migrate to the city of Medinah. Soon, a battle took place at Badr between the 'few and ill-armed', represented by Muhammad ﷺ and his followers, and the pagans

congealed blood). * Read! And Your Rubb is the Most Generous. * Who has taught (the Writing) by the pen (the first person to write was Prophet Enoch. Idris, ﷺ). He has taught mean that which he knew not."

[Surah al-'Alaq (96):1-5]

16 Note also that the Bible refers to the Israelites as the "brethren" of the Ishmaelites: e.g. Gen. 16: 12 & Gen 25:18.

17 "God (His revelation) came from Teman, and the Holy One from Mount Paran. Selah. His glory covered the heavens, and the earth was full of his praise." [Habakkuk 3:3]

from Makkah a year after the Prophet's ﷺ migration. The Prophet ﷺ and his companions were victorious (Isaiah 21: 13-17).

The man knew that Jesus عليه السلام told of the coming of Prophet Ahmad ﷺ (Muhammad ﷺ).[18] These were the good tidings which Allah spoke about on the tongue of Jesus,

﴿ وَإِذْ قَالَ عِيسَى ٱبْنُ مَرْيَمَ يَٰبَنِىٓ إِسْرَٰٓءِيلَ إِنِّى رَسُولُ ٱللَّهِ إِلَيْكُم مُّصَدِّقًا لِّمَا بَيْنَ يَدَىَّ مِنَ ٱلتَّوْرَىٰةِ وَمُبَشِّرًۢا بِرَسُولٍ يَأْتِى مِنۢ بَعْدِى ٱسْمُهُۥٓ أَحْمَدُ ﴾

"And (remember) when Jesus, son of Mary said: 'O children of Israel! I am the Messenger of Allah unto you confirming the Torah (which came) before me, and giving glad tidings of a Messenger to come after me, whose name shall be Ahmad.' "

[Surah as-Saff (61):6]

The man died, and Salman stayed in 'Amooreeyah. One day, "Some merchants from the tribe of Kalb[19] passed by

[18] Ahmad literally means: "One who praises Allah more than others". It is the second name of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ who said in an authentic hadith, "I have five names: I am Muhammad and Ahmad, I am Al-Maahi through who Allah will eliminate (infidelity), I am Al-Haashir who will be the first to be resurrected, all other people being resurrected thereafter, and I am also Al-'Aaqib [i.e., there will be no Prophet after me]. This narration is reported in Sahih al-Bukhaari, the most authentic collection of Prophetic sayings, actions and traditions. (V.4, # 732, English-Arabic. Published by Dar-Arabia, Beirut, Lebanon)

[19] An Arab tribe.

me," Salman said, "I told them, 'Take me to Arabia and I will give you my cows and the only sheep I have.' " They said, "Yes." Salman gave them what he offered, and they took him with them. When they reached Waadi al-Quraa [close to Medinah], they sold him as a slave to a Jew. Salman stayed with the Jew, and he saw the Palm trees [his previous companion had described]. "I hoped that this would be the same place described by my companion," Salman said. One day, a man who was a first cousin to Salman's master from the Jewish tribe of Bani Quraidha in Medinah came visiting. He bought Salman from his Jewish master, "He took me with him to Medinah. By Allah! When I saw it, I knew it was the place my companion described."

"Then Allah sent His Messenger [i.e., Muhammad ﷺ]. He stayed in Makkah as long as he did.[20] I did not hear anything about him because I was very busy with the work of slavery, and then he migrated to Medinah."

Salman continued saying, "[One day,] I was on a palm-tree on top of one of its date-clusters doing some work for my master. A first cousin of his came and stood in front of him [his master was sitting] and said, 'Woe to Bani Qeelah [people of the tribe Qeelah], they are gathered in Qibaa'[21] around a man who came today from Makkah claiming to be a Prophet!' "

"I trembled so fiercely when I heard him that I feared that I would fall on my master. I descended and said, 'What are you saying!? What are you saying!?' My master

[20] Thirteen years after he received the revelation from Allah.

[21] In the city of Medinah.

became angry and punched me with a powerful punch saying, 'What business do you have in this [matter]? Go and mind your business.' I said, 'Nothing! I just wanted to be sure of what he was saying.' "

"On that evening, I went to see the Messenger of Allah while he was in Qibaa'. I took something with me which I had saved. I went in and said, 'I was told that you are a righteous man and that your company [who] are strangers [here] are in need. I want to offer you something I saved as charity. I found that you deserve it more than anyone else.' " Salman said, "I offered it to him; he said to his companions, 'Eat,' but he himself kept his hand away [i.e., did not eat]. I said to myself, 'This is one [i.e., one of the signs of his Prophethood].' "

Following this encounter with the Prophet ﷺ, Salman left to prepare for another test! This time he brought a gift to the Prophet ﷺ in Medinah. "I saw that you do not eat from that given as charity, so here is a gift with which I wish to honor you." The Prophet ﷺ ate from it and ordered his companions to do the same, which they did. I said to myself, 'Now there are two [i.e., two of the signs of Prophethood].' "

On the third encounter, Salman came to Baqee'-ul-Gharqad [the burial site of the Prophet's ﷺ companions] where the Prophet ﷺ was attending the funeral of one of his companions. Salman said, "I greeted him [with the greeting of Islam: 'Peace be upon you'], and then moved towards his back attempting to see the seal [of Prophethood] which was described to me by my companion. When he ﷺ saw me [doing so], he knew that I was trying to confirm something described to me. He

took the garment off his back and I looked at the seal. I recognized it. I fell down upon it, kissing it and crying. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ told me to move around [i.e., to talk to him]. I told him my story as I did with you, ibn 'Abbaas [remember that Salman is telling his story to ibn 'Abbaas]. He [the Prophet ﷺ] liked it so much he wanted me to tell my story to his companions."

Slavery to Allah Alone

Salman continued to tell his story to ibn 'Abbaas:

He still belonged to his master. He missed two battles fought against the pagans of Arabia. The Prophet ﷺ said to him, "Make a contract [with your master] for your freedom, O Salman." Salman obeyed and made a contract [with his master] for his freedom. He reached an agreement with his master in which he would pay him forty ounces of gold and would plant and successfully raise three hundred new palm trees. The Prophet ﷺ said to his companions, "Help your brother."

They helped him with the trees and gathered for him the specified quantity. The Prophet ﷺ ordered Salman to dig the proper holes to plant the saplings, and then he ﷺ planted each one with his own hands. Salman said, "By Him in Whose hands is my soul [i.e., Allah], not a single tree died." Salman gave the trees to his master. The Prophet ﷺ gave Salman a piece of gold that was the size of a chicken egg and said, "Take this, O Salman, and pay [i.e., your master] what you owe." Salman said, "How much is this in regards to how much I owe!" The Prophet ﷺ said, "Take it! Allah will [make it] equal to

what you owe."[22] I took it and I weighed a part of it and it was forty ounces. Salman gave the gold to his master. He fulfilled the agreement and he was released.

From then on, Salman became a close companion of the Prophet ﷺ.

One of the great companions of the Prophet ﷺ by the name of Abu Hurairah reported, "We were sitting in the company of Allah's Messenger ﷺ when Surah al-Jumu'ah [Surah 62] was revealed. He recited these words,

﴿وَءَاخَرِينَ مِنْهُمْ لَمَّا يَلْحَقُوا۟ بِهِمْ﴾

"And [He (Allah) has sent him (Muhammad) also to] other (Muslims) who have not joined them (but they will come)."

[Surah al-Jumu'ah (62):3]

A person amongst them said, 'O Allah's Messenger! Who are those who have not joined us?' But Allah's Messenger ﷺ made no reply. Salman al-Farisee was amongst us. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ placed his hand on Salman and then said, 'By the One in Whose Hands is my soul, even if faith were near Ath-Thurayyaa' (Plaeiades, the seven stars), men from amongst these [i.e. Salman's folk] would surely attain it.' " [Sunan at-Tirmidhi]

22 A miracle from Allah.

But They will Come!

Many in this world are like Salman, searching for the truth about the True and Only One God. This story of Salman is similar to stories of people in our own time. The search of some people took them from one church to another, from church to Buddhism or Passiveness, from Judaism to 'Neutrality', from religion to meditations to mental abuse. I have met and heard about some who shifted from one idea to another, but were too 'afraid' of even wanting to know something about Islam! When they met some Muslims, however, they opened their minds. The story of Salman is that of a long search. You could make your search for truth shorter by benefiting from his.

References

1) Qissat Islam Salman: Arabic Text By Hussein al-'Uwaishah.

2) The Table on Page 21 from the book, Muhammad in the Bible after correcting the issue about the 'death' of Jesus, عليه السلام. The fact is that Jesus did not die. Allah saved him from crucifixion and he ascended to heaven. His death will occur before the Day of Judgment and after his return to earth. While on earth, Jesus ﷺ will rule by the Book of Allah, the Qur'aan, and by the teachings of Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon both of them.